

ILLUMINATI[®]

THE GAME OF CONSPIRACY

Basic Rules	2
Object of the Game	2
Beginning the Game.....	2
Sequence of Play	2
The Groups	3
Alignment	3
Power	3
Resistance	4
Income.....	4
Special Abilities	4
Actions.....	4
Attacks.....	4
Attack to Control	4
Attack to Neutralize.....	6
Attack to Destroy	6
Interference.....	7
Calling Off an Attack	7
Transferring Money.....	7
Moving a Group	7
Free Actions.....	7
Gifts and Trades	7
Transferring Groups.....	7
Throwing the Game	8
When Is a Deal Binding?.....	8
Threats and Negotiations.....	8
Special Cards	8
Eliminating a Player.....	8
Leaving the Game.....	8
Winning the Game.....	8
Advanced Rules	9
Adjusting Game Length	9
Hidden Goals	9
Hidden Illuminati.....	9
Larger Games	9
Cheating.....	9
Strategy	10
The Power Structure.....	10
Negotiations.....	10
Capturing Several Groups at Once	10
About the Illuminati	11
Bibliography	15
<i>Illuminati</i> Rules Summary.....	16



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Components

This game includes 8 *Illuminati* cards; 83 cards representing other Groups; 15 Special cards; 4 blank cards; 160 money tokens, representing megabucks (MB); two dice; and this rulebook.

Number of Players

Illuminati is best for four to six players. You can play with three or even two, but this limits the possibilities for diplomacy and negotiation. With seven or eight, some rule changes will be needed to keep the game moving quickly (see p. 9).

Contents

This book has three sections: *Basic Rules*, *Advanced Rules*, and *Strategy*. You may start by reading only the Basic Rules, leaving the rest until later. The Rules Summary on the back page contains everything necessary to play.

BASIC RULES

Object of the Game

The object of *Illuminati* is to take control of the world. You start with a single Illuminati card, representing your own secret conspiracy. During the game, you take over other Groups (represented by cards). These Groups are added to your Power Structure and do your bidding – unless a foe takes them from you. You may win either by controlling enough Groups, or by fulfilling the special goal of your own Illuminati. See p. 8.

Beginning the Game

Remove the eight Illuminati cards from the deck; they have dark backs to make them easy to find. Place them face-down on the table. Each player draws an Illuminati card, places it face-up before him, and draws its indicated Income from the bank, placing it on the card. Leftover Illuminati cards are not used for the remainder of the game.

Shuffle the remaining cards (including Specials) and place them face-down in the center of the table.

Turn four cards face-up and place them in the center of the table. (If any Special cards are turned over, bury them in the deck and turn over new Group cards to replace them.) These four Groups are the original “uncontrolled Groups.”

Each player rolls two dice; the player with the highest roll plays first. He follows the Sequence of Play, below: he starts by collecting more income for his Illuminati Group, turning over one card, and then (probably) trying to take over an uncontrolled Group with his Illuminati. And the race for world control is on!

Sequence of Play

Play proceeds in turns. On his turn, a player does the following:

1. *Collect Income.* For each Group that has an Income, draw that income from the bank. Put the money directly on that card (the Group treasury). *Hint:* The game will go faster if players count up their Income before their turn starts, and have it ready *beside* each Group card. Money should not be placed on the card until that player’s turn actually begins.

A player may stack his money so only the top one can be seen, or spread them out to flaunt his wealth.

2. *Draw a card.* If the card is a Group, it is placed face-up in the center of the table, with the other uncontrolled Groups.

If it is a Special card, the player keeps it. He may place it face-down or face-up (whichever he chooses) in front of him. However, he must display the card; he can’t hide it in a pocket. The other players do not have the right to know what the card says, but they do have the right to know *how many* Specials each player has.

3. *Take two “actions,”* as explained below.

4. *Take any “free actions.”* Free actions (also explained below) do not count against the two actions a player is allowed during each turn. Free actions may be taken before, between, or after a player’s regular two actions.

5. *Transfer money.* Part or all of the contents of two treasuries may be moved to the treasuries of *adjacent* Groups. See p. 7.

6. *Take special-power actions.* If the player is the Gnomes of Zurich, this is the time when he may redistribute his money between treasuries. If he is the Bermuda Triangle, this is the time when he may reorganize his Power Structure.

7. *Add targets.* At the end of each turn, if the uncontrolled area has fewer than two Groups, draw cards until there are two uncontrolled Groups. If a Special is drawn, discard it.

Play continues *counter-clockwise* until a player (or coalition of players) wins by achieving their Goals – see p. 16. As play develops, a game might look something like this:

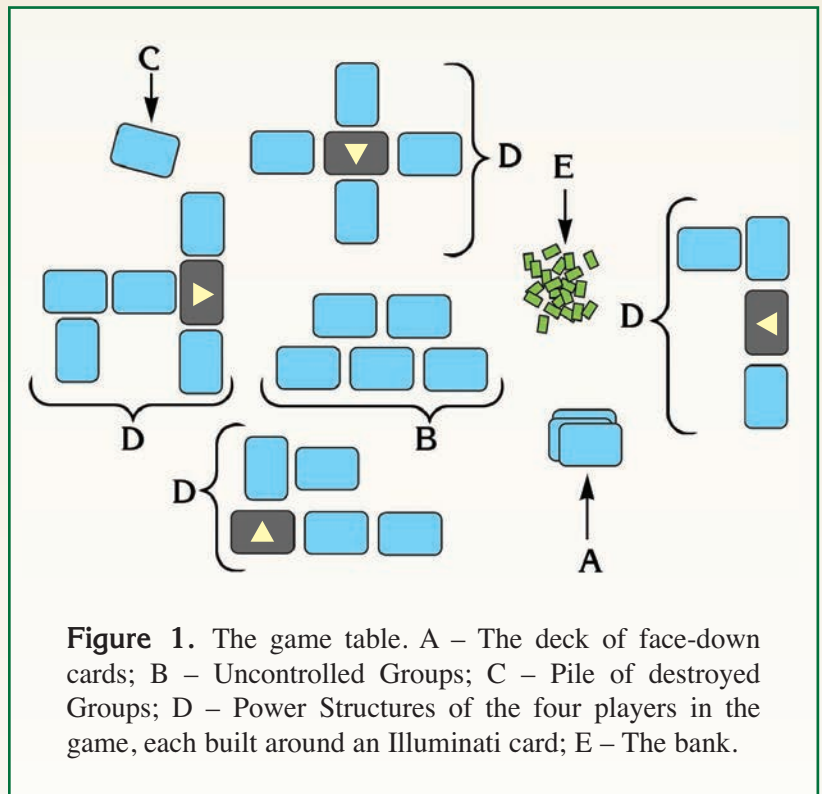


Figure 1. The game table. A – The deck of face-down cards; B – Uncontrolled Groups; C – Pile of destroyed Groups; D – Power Structures of the four players in the game, each built around an Illuminati card; E – The bank.

Alignment

There are ten possible political alignments. It is easier for a Group to *control* or *neutralize* Groups with similar alignments, and to *destroy* those of opposite alignments. Some cards have one alignment, some have several, and a few have none. Meanings of the alignments, for the purposes of this game, are:

Government – An arm of the U.S. government; its opposite is *Communist*.

Communist – Inspired by the Soviets or Chinese or Albanians or somebody; its opposite is *Government*.

Liberal – Politically “left,” whatever that means; its opposite is *Conservative*.

Conservative – Usually mad at the Liberals; its opposite is *Liberal*.

Peaceful – Philosophically opposed to the use of force; its opposite is *Violent*.

Violent – Armed and/or dangerous; not necessarily vicious; its opposite is *Peaceful*.

Straight – Socially middle-of-the-road; Middle American; its opposite is *Weird*.

Weird – Peculiar, offbeat, notably different from the neighbors; its opposite is *Straight*.

Criminal – Extorting money from citizens through force or threat, and/or breaking the law professionally; there is no opposite.

Fanatic – Adhering to a limited system of beliefs in defiance of all others; any two Fanatic Groups are considered “opposite” to each other.

Figure 2. A typical Power Structure. The center of any Power Structure is the Illuminati card. Each player starts with one of the eight Illuminati cards; each is different and has its own special abilities. In this example, the Illuminati control three Groups directly: the Democrats, the Congressional Wives, and the South American Nazis. The South American Nazis control two Groups: the KGB and the Cycle Gangs. The Democrats control one Group: the Antiwar Activists.



The Groups

The basic elements of *Illuminati* are the *Group* cards, ranging from the Illuminati themselves to the Yuppies and the Boy Sprouts. (*Any resemblance to real organizations is purely satirical in nature.*) Each Group has certain characteristics. See Figure 3 below.

Power

The Power number shown on the card is a measure of its ability to dominate other Groups. The higher the number, the greater the Power. If a Group has two numbers (for example: 7/4), the first number is its regular Power and the second represents the portion of that Power which can be used to assist *another* Group in an attack (Transferable Power).

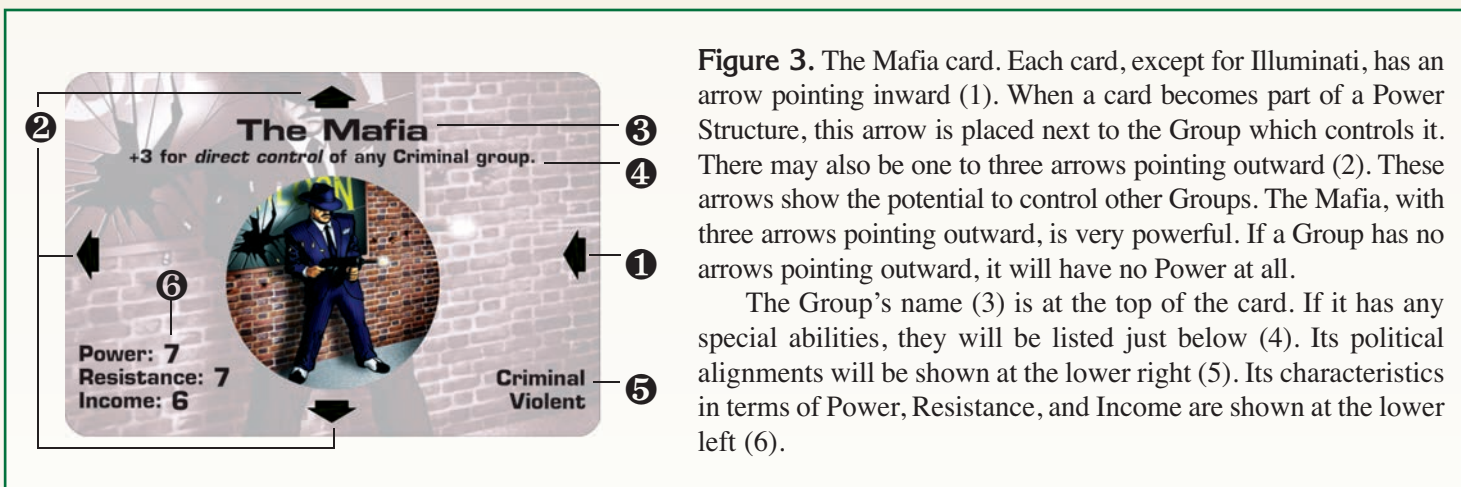


Figure 3. The Mafia card. Each card, except for Illuminati, has an arrow pointing inward (1). When a card becomes part of a Power Structure, this arrow is placed next to the Group which controls it. There may also be one to three arrows pointing outward (2). These arrows show the potential to control other Groups. The Mafia, with three arrows pointing outward, is very powerful. If a Group has no arrows pointing outward, it will have no Power at all.

The Group’s name (3) is at the top of the card. If it has any special abilities, they will be listed just below (4). Its political alignments will be shown at the lower right (5). Its characteristics in terms of Power, Resistance, and Income are shown at the lower left (6).

A card with no Power cannot attack. A few Groups have transferable power only (Power 0/1, for instance). This means they cannot attack, but can help *another* Group attack.

Resistance

This is a measure of a Group's ability to resist domination. The lower its Resistance, the easier it is to take over . . . and the harder it is to protect when you control it.

The Illuminati Groups have no Resistance number, because they cannot be attacked directly.

Income

Money is measured in Megabucks (MB). At the beginning of your turn, each Group you control collects the amount listed on its card. This income is placed directly on that card, becoming part of the Group's treasury. If a card has no Income, it gets no money. Uncontrolled Groups get no Income.

Two cards have a special Income. The IRS gets its Income by taxing each of the other players 2 MB on the owning player's turn. The Post Office *costs* 1 MB per turn to control (paid by their master or their Illuminati).



Special Abilities

All Illuminati, and some other Groups, have “special abilities” shown on their cards. There are two kinds of special abilities.

“*Any attempt*” abilities give an extra power to the *holder* of the card. Any attempt by that *player* to do that thing, regardless of which Group tries it, will receive the indicated bonus. For instance, if you control the Cycle Gangs, any attempt you make to destroy another Group *with any of your Groups* will get a +2 bonus. This ability comes to you as soon as you take over the Cycle Gangs, and is lost as soon as you lose them. A Group may give a bonus on “any attempt to control,” even if it has no outgoing arrows.

Other abilities apply only to the card itself. For instance, the Mafia have a +3 to control any Criminal card. This means you get a 3-point bonus when trying to take over a Criminal Group *with the Mafia*. If you try to take over a Criminal Group with another card, the fact that you hold the Mafia makes no difference. Note, though, that a special bonus like this is *in addition to* any regular bonus a Group gets for alignment. The Mafia would also have a +4 bonus to control other Criminal cards because its own alignment is Criminal (see p. 5). Thus, it would have a total of +7 for control of other Criminal cards!

For oddball special abilities like that of the IRS, follow the instructions on the card.

Actions

There are three types of actions: an *attack*, a *money transfer*, and *moving a Group*. Each action must be completed before beginning another. A player may elect to take no actions (not even free actions, free money transfers or special actions) and collect 5 MB for his Illuminati treasury instead. Actions *cannot* be saved for later turns.

Attacks

The most important actions in *Illuminati* are attacks. In an attack, a Group uses its Power, and probably its money, in an attempt to either *control*, *neutralize*, or *destroy* another Group.

Illuminati cards themselves can attack, but cannot be attacked. No Group, except the UFOs, can attack more than once per turn.

Attack to Control

This attack may be made against any other Group in play except another Illuminati or a Group you *already* control. The attacking Group must have at least one outward-pointing arrow free. If a Group has no open outward-pointing arrow (either because all are being used or some are blocked), it cannot attempt to control another Group.

To attack, the player announces which Group is attacking, which one is being attacked, and the type of attack. (Example: “The KKK, assisted by the CIA, will attempt to control the Yuppies.”)

The success of the attack is determined by rolling two dice. To find the roll required for a successful attack, subtract the defending Group's Resistance from the attacking Group's Power. *Example:* If a Power of 6 attacks a Resistance of 2, it can succeed only on a roll of 4 or less. If a Power of 10 attacked that same Resistance of 2, it would succeed on an 8 or less, giving it a much better chance.

Automatic Failure. A roll of 11 or 12 results in automatic failure of the attack, no matter how much Power was involved.

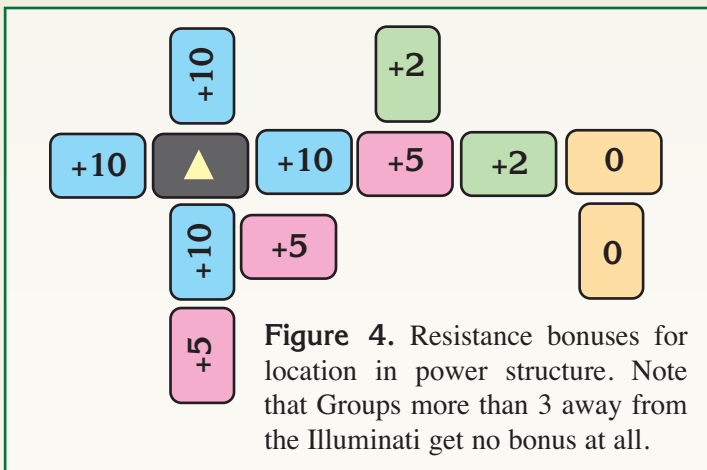
Aiding Attacks. All Illuminati, and some other Groups, have *transferable power*. If a Group has two Power numbers separated by a slash (like 5/2), the *second* number is its transferable power. If a Group does not attack during a turn, it may use its transferable power to *aid* an attack made by any other Group in its Power Structure.

Any number of Groups may aid one attack by adding Transferable Power. However, any one Group may participate in only one attack per turn. (Exception: The Special Ability of the UFOs lets them participate in two attacks per turn.) *Example:* A Group with a power of 6, aided by another Group with a transferable power of 4, is attacking a Group with a resistance of 3. The attacker has a total power of 10 (6 plus 4), and will have to roll a 7 or less (10 minus 3) to succeed.

When an attack is announced, all transferable power to be used in that attack must be announced *before* any money is spent (see below) to support the attack. No transferable power may be added in the middle of the attack.

Alignment of the Group(s) transferring power does not matter.

Power Structure Position. If a Group is already controlled by an opponent, it may be harder to control. The closer it is to the Illuminati who control it, the more of a bonus it gets to Resistance (or to Power if someone tries to destroy it). If it is adjacent, it gets a +10! If it is one Group away, it gets a +5. If it is two Groups away, it gets a +2.



Alignments. The alignments of the attacking and defending Groups are also important. Identical alignments make control easier; opposed alignments make it harder. If the Groups have any *identical* alignments, **add 4** to the attacker's effective Power for each identical alignment. If they have any *opposite* alignments, **subtract 4** for each. *Example:* A Weird, Communist Group is trying to control a Straight, Government Group. Two sets of opposite alignments subtract 8 from the attacking power on this attack.



Special Powers. Some Groups' special powers (shown on the card) will help them attack or defend against certain opponents.

Spending Money To Attack. The attacker may also improve his chances by using some of his money in the attack. Each MB spent (returned to the bank) adds one point of Power to that attack. However, all Transferable Power to be used must be added and announced *before* any money is spent.

Attacking money may be spent from both the attacking Group's treasury and the Illuminati treasury. Other Groups in the Power Structure cannot spend money to aid the attack. *Example:* In the instance above, the attacker was afraid he might not roll a 7 or less. So he spent 3 MB. Now he needs to roll a 10 or less, which is much easier.

Once the roll needed to succeed has reached 10, additional spending will not improve the attacker's odds; an 11 or 12 always fails. But additional money or power can still be useful. For instance, if an attacker uses enough money and power to exceed the target's resistance by 20, the defender would have to spend 20 MB to get the attacking roll back down to zero again!

Spending Money To Defend. If the defending Group is controlled by another player, the defender may counter an attack by spending some of his own money. Resistance to that attack will increase by **two** for each MB spent from the defending Group's treasury, and by **one** for each MB spent from his Illuminati treasury. Other Groups cannot participate. All money spent goes immediately to the bank. *Example:* In the instance above, the defender has 3 MB on the defending Group. He spends it all. It counts double, so instead of a 10, the attacker now needs to roll a 4. The attacker may then commit more money to offset the defender's spending.

Continued Spending. The attacker and defender can each go back and forth, putting in more money, as long as they are able. When no player is willing to spend more money to affect the attack, the dice are rolled to determine the result. Remember: *a roll of 11 or 12 results in automatic failure*, no matter how much power or money is used in the attack.

Results of the Attack. If the attack fails, the defending Group remains where it was.

If an Attack to Control is successful, the target Group is captured and added to the attacking player's Power Structure. It is placed next to its captor, with its inward-pointing arrow next to an outward-pointing arrow of the capturing Group, which becomes its new "master."

The controlled Group is now called a "puppet." Puppets may then capture puppets of their own, and so on!

It does not matter if a card is upside-down or sideways, as long as the arrows line up properly.

If the captured Group already had puppets of its own, they are also captured. When placed in the attacker's Power Structure, they should keep the same position, relative to their own master, that they had originally. If that is not possible because of overlaps with cards the attacker already has, he may rearrange any new cards that overlap, as long as they are still controlled by the same Group. New Groups which still cannot fit are dropped and become uncontrolled.

Half of the money remaining in the captured Groups' treasuries (round down) goes with them to the new owner; the rest is returned to the bank.

The Group which attacked may immediately transfer any or all of its treasury to the Group it just captured. This is not a separate action, but is considered part of the attack. Such a transfer is often a good idea, either to protect the new Group from attack or to let it mount an attack of its own.

If a player's first action is an attack, and it fails, the *player* may attack the same Group again as his second action. However, *no individual Group (except the UFOs) may attack twice in a turn.*

A newly-controlled Group may attack (or aid an attack, or use its special ability) on the same turn in which it was acquired.

Attack to Neutralize

This is identical to an "Attack to Control" except:

1. The target must be a Group that is already controlled by another player.



2. The attacker gains an additional +6 bonus.

3. The attacker does not need an open control arrow.

4. If the attack succeeds, the target Group and any subordinates are placed in the *uncontrolled* area. All their money is returned to the bank.

Attack to Destroy

This is identical to an "Attack to Control" except:

1. Instead of rolling "Power minus Resistance," the attacker rolls "Power minus Power." In other words, the defending Group defends with its Power rather than its Resistance. (Its closeness to its Illuminati, as shown on p. 5, still counts for defense.)

A Group with no Power *cannot be destroyed* except by the Special card *Whispering Campaign*. The factors

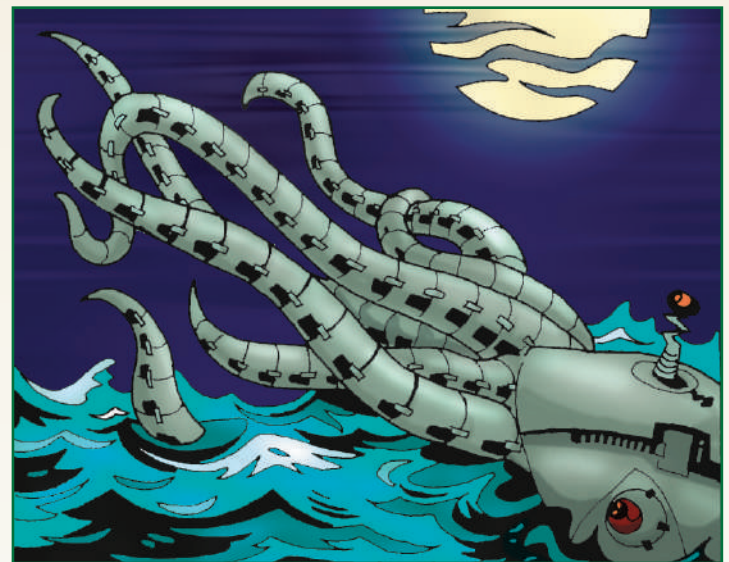
which keep powerless Groups from organizing enough to control other Groups also make them too diffuse to wipe out.

2. Groups with different philosophies destroy each other more easily. An Attack to Destroy gets a +4 bonus for every *opposite* alignment, and a -4 for every *identical* alignment.

3. A Group does not need an open control arrow in order to attempt destruction.

4. If the attack succeeds, the target Group goes to the "dead pile." Its subordinate Groups are not destroyed, but become uncontrolled. It can be revived only by the Special card *Media Campaign*.

5. You may try to destroy a Group you already control. In this case, the target's closeness to its Illuminati does not protect it. But no Group may attack *itself*, or aid an attempt to destroy itself!



Interference

A player may *interfere* in an attack, either by helping the attacker or by opposing him. To do so, he announces who he will help, and then contributes money *from his Illuminati treasury only*. This money goes to the bank. It affects the needed die roll by 1 for each MB spent.

An attacker may prevent Interference by declaring an attack “Privileged.” To do this, he must discard *any* one Special card and call “Privilege!” *when first declaring the attack*. No one can interfere either for or against a Privileged Attack.

The Bavarian Illuminati have the Special Ability to declare one attack per turn Privileged, at the cost of 5 MB payable from their Illuminati treasury. If that player wishes to use his Special Ability, he must declare the Privilege and pay the 5 MB when he first announces the attack.

Privilege may be abolished by use of the Special card *Deep Agent*, or by discarding two Special cards (see p. 8). If the Privilege is abolished, it cannot be reinstated on that attack.

Calling Off an Attack

After a player announces an attack, he *can* change his mind and call it off – *until* he puts some money down. Once he actually takes money from his treasury and puts it in the bank, the attack is *committed*. It must be played out, and it does count as an action.

If the attacker spends no money, the attack is committed when another player spends money (either for or against him) or when the attacker rolls the dice.

Transferring Money

A Group may, as an action, transfer any of its money to an adjacent Group – either its master, or a puppet. A player may make two money transfers as part of his turn (*Sequence of Play*, p. 2). But if necessary, he can also make a transfer as a regular action. By successive transfers, the same money may be moved two or more Groups in one turn.

Moving a Group

A player may, as an action, reorganize his Power Structure by moving a Group to a vacant outgoing control arrow. The new control arrow may be on the Group’s master, or any other Group the player controls. If the moving Group has any puppets, then they (and their own puppets, and so on) are also moved.

Cards may not overlap. If moving a Group would cause some of its puppets (or theirs) to overlap, any of them may also be moved to different control arrows, *as long as they are still controlled by the same master*. Any puppet that cannot be prevented from overlapping is *lost*. It, and its own puppets, are returned to the uncontrolled area.



Free Actions

Some things may be done during the “action” part of a turn without counting as “actions.” These include:

Dropping Groups – removing a Group from your Power Structure and returning it to the uncontrolled area. (Its puppets must also become uncontrolled.)

Aiding an attack – using Transferable Power to assist another Group. This counts as part of the attack being aided.

Giving away a Special card or money – this may be done at any time, not just during your turn. Money may be transferred only between Illuminati treasuries when it goes to another player.

Using a Special card – follow the instructions on the card. (Exception: Using the *Bribery* card is a regular action.)

Gifts and Trades

Groups, special cards, and money may be transferred between players: traded, sold (that is, traded for money) or given away. Cash or special cards may be transferred any time (except when a privileged attack is under way). This does not count as an action. When cash is transferred, it must come from an Illuminati card and go to another one. Other Groups cannot give their money to another player, or receive money from another player.

Transferring Groups

Groups may only be transferred if it is the turn of one of the players involved. On your turn, you may give a Group away (even if you get nothing in return), sell or trade it, or trade something (cash, cards or Groups) to get a Group or Groups in return. Each Group exchanged counts as an action for the player whose turn it is, whichever way the Group moves. So if you trade a Group for a Group on your turn, that counts as two actions – one to move the first Group, one to move the second one!

You may only *give* a Group away with the permission of the player who receives it!



When a Group is transferred to another player, its puppets (if any) must go with it, along with all treasuries involved. The player receiving the Group must immediately fit it, and its puppets, into his power structure, exactly as for moved or captured Groups – see above. If overlaps cannot be avoided, the player must eliminate them by choosing one or more overlapping card, new or old, to become uncontrolled.

Throwing the Game

No player may simply “throw” the game to another by giving them enough Groups, money, etc. to let them win. A trade that lets *both* players win is perfectly legal. It is also legal to trade with another player at the beginning of your turn and *then* surprise everyone, including the person you traded with, by revealing a special card or pulling off an unexpected attack.

This prohibition requires a certain amount of interpretation and honor among players. The intent is just to keep any one player from, for whatever reason, giving away the game in one fell swoop. A losing player cannot necessarily just decide who will win. (On the other hand, by attacking someone, they may very well decide who *loses*.)

When Is a Deal Binding?

When two players agree to a deal, it is binding if they make the exchange immediately. A deal is *not* binding if it involves an exchange of one thing now for something in the future. *Example:* If you say “I’ll give you 10 MB for the Boy Sprouts, right now,” and the other player gives you the Boy Sprouts, you have to pay. But if you say “If you give me the Boy Sprouts next turn, I’ll pay you 10 MB next turn,” and he gives you the Group, you don’t *have* to pay next turn, unless you want to!

Threats and Negotiations

Any agreement between players, secret or otherwise, is permitted as long as it does not actually violate the rules of the game. For some suggestions, see the Advanced Rules section on the next page.

In particular, it is perfectly legal to try to change an opponent’s mind, by promises or threats, about his planned action.

Special Cards

Each of these cards gives an advantage to the player who draws it. They may be kept face-down or shown, as the player wishes – but he must keep them spread so other players can see how many specials he has. Special cards may be traded, sold, or given away at any time; this is a free action.

Each Special may be used only once. Some may be used at any time; others have restrictions, stated on the card. Playing a Special is not an action unless the card says it is. After a card is used, it is discarded.

Any special card may also be discarded to make an attack “privileged” – see p. 7. Any *two* special cards may be discarded together, by the same person, to *abolish* someone else’s privilege. If *Secrets Man Was Not Meant To Know* is used to cancel *one* of those cards, the other one is lost unless the player can replace it! (Remember that no one may exchange or give away Specials *after* privilege has been declared. And once an attack loses its privilege, it may not get it back.)

If two specials are played and one contradicts the other (for example, *Assassination* and *Murphy’s Law*), the last card played is the one that governs.

Eliminating a Player

A player is eliminated if, at any time after his third turn, he controls no Groups except his Illuminati. His money goes to the bank. *Exception:* If the Servants of Cthulhu destroy their own last Group, and in doing so, achieve their Special Goal (eight Groups destroyed), they are not destroyed themselves . . . they win!

Leaving the Game

If a player drops out, his Groups go uncontrolled and their treasuries go to the bank. His Illuminati card is taken out of play.

Winning the Game

The game ends when, at the end of a turn (his own or someone else’s) a player meets one of his Goals. If two or more players both meet their Goals at the same time, they share the victory, dividing the world between them.

The *Basic* Goal is the same for all players: to control a certain number of Groups. This number depends on the number of players at the beginning of the game. If a player leaves or is eliminated, the number of Groups required to win (see p. 16) does *not* change.

The *Special* Goal is another way a player can win. This is different for each player, representing a specific goal or aim of that particular Illuminati. A player wins if he meets his Special Goal at the end of any turn.

All the Goals are listed on the back page, for easy reference.

ADVANCED RULES

These optional rules will provide you with many new ways of playing *Illuminati*. Add them one at a time or in any combination you like. The game may become as intricate and complicated as you please. The choice is yours. Use your power wisely . . .

Adjusting Game Length

A game usually lasts from 1½ to 3 hours. For a longer game, increase the number of Groups required for the Basic Goal.

For a very long game, ignore both the Basic and the Special Goals and play until there are no cards left uncontrolled. Then add up the total Power of each player's Groups, plus 1 for each Group controlled. The winner is the player with the highest score.

Hidden Goals

Each Illuminati Group has its normal special power, but no Group (except the UFOs) has its normal Special Goal. Instead, *each* player chooses one possible Goal from the list and writes it down, just as the UFOs normally do. Increase the UFOs' Power by 1 to make up for the loss of one of their advantages.



Hidden Illuminati

Each player keeps his Illuminati Group upside-down! Only the player knows which Illuminati he controls. A player can only use the Power, Income, and special power of

his own Group – but he is never required to use *all* of his Power or Income, or reveal his special power. (Anyone caught cheating is out of the game!)

During the action phase of his turn, a player may make an accusation against another player (for example, “I think you’re Cthulhu”). This counts as one of the player’s two actions, but does not count against any specific Group. An incorrect accusation has no effect; a correct identification forces the identified Illuminati to play face-up.

The advantage to being unidentified, of course, is that your Special Goal is unknown to the other players. However, once the UFOs are identified, they are played face-up, but their true Goal remains unknown!

Alternative Rule: An unidentified Illuminati may legally “overstate” his Power and/or Income by 1, until he is identified.

Larger Games

Normally, no more than six should play at once. But there *are* eight Illuminati cards. If you use them all, expect the game to last at least three or four hours. For a seven-player game, the income of each Illuminati card should be increased by 3 MB per turn. In an eight-player game, increase Illuminati incomes by 5 MB per turn.

Cheating

Some fiendish people think *Illuminati* is even more fun when nothing – not even the bank – is sacred. In this variant of the game, most forms of cheating are permitted. *Exceptions:*

1. You may not tip over the table or disarrange opposing Power Structures.
2. You may not bring in counterfeit money, or money from other sets.
3. You may not cheat on the amount of money drawn from the bank during setup or the Income phase. (This would slow things down *too* much.)
Anything else goes. Anyone caught in the act must undo that cheat. There is no other penalty.

Suggested methods for cheating include:

1. Accidentally misread the dice.
2. Steal from the bank (other than during the Income phase).
3. Lie about the amount of Power or Resistance your Groups have.
4. Stack the deck, or peek ahead.
5. If anyone leaves the table, anything goes!

We recommend you play the Cheating Game only with *very* good friends, or with people you will never see again.

STRATEGY

Conspiring for a shared victory may seem easier than grabbing the whole pie. But be careful who you trust.

When someone leaves the room, conspire against him. There is almost always a way you can make your positions a little bit better and his a little bit worse.

Negotiate with everyone. Your foes are less likely to attack you if they think you might make a deal that will help them win.

To avoid being attacked, you should look strong enough to defend yourself, but not so strong that you are a threat.

Watch the other players constantly; keep track of how close they are to their Goals. If they have Special cards, they are more likely to be able to win in a single turn. Don't count on other players to warn you of danger; they may have made a private deal!

The Power Structure

There are many ways to assemble a Power Structure from the Groups you control. Some ways are better than others.

The example given earlier in the rules (Figure 2, p. 3) is a good Power Structure because it leaves several control arrows open. Figure 5, to the right, shows another legal Power Structure, using exactly the same Groups. This one, however, is a bad one – or at least, less desirable. The Groups get in each other's way!

Although the Illuminati have one unused control arrow, that arrow is blocked – the Antiwar Activists are in the way. The Congressional Wives have one open control arrow and can take over another Group. The Democrats have two open arrows, but only the end one can be used – the one on the side is blocked by the Congressional Wives!

Also, take care that your Power Structure is balanced. If all of your Groups branch from a single Illuminati control arrow after the third turn, you are in great danger of being eliminated in a single attack.

Negotiations

Deals can be made either openly or secretly. Some possible deals include:

1. The player who controls the IRS agrees to forego another's taxes in exchange for a promise from that player not to attack him.

2. One player sees that another will achieve her Goal at the end of the turn if he does not interfere. He might agree not to interfere in exchange for a gift that will also satisfy his own Goals, thereby sharing the victory.

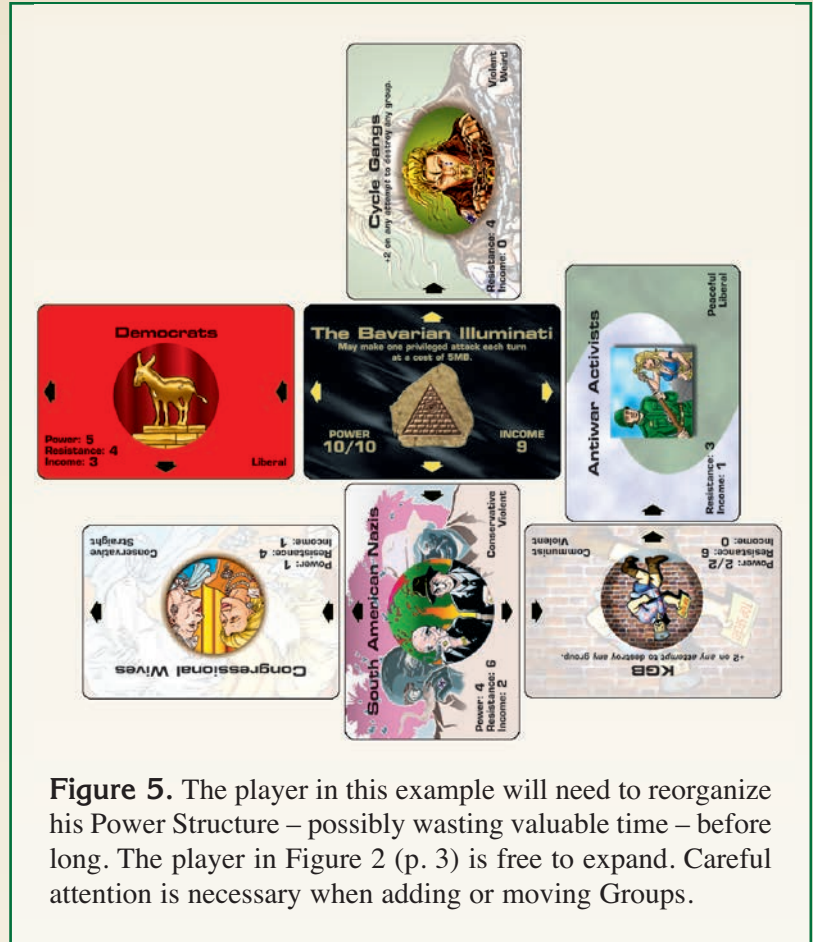


Figure 5. The player in this example will need to reorganize his Power Structure – possibly wasting valuable time – before long. The player in Figure 2 (p. 3) is free to expand. Careful attention is necessary when adding or moving Groups.

3. A player threatens to destroy one of your Groups. You think he can. You might try bribing him (in this case bribery is treated as a gift) to get him to attack someone else instead.

4. Two players agree to cooperate throughout the game so that they both achieve their Goals at the same time – of course, one may stab the other in the back!

5. A player offers money to anybody who will attack his particular foe.

6. Two or more players form a coalition to bring down a rival who is getting too near victory.

The possibilities are limited only by your own duplicity. Remember, though, that money may be exchanged only between Illuminati treasuries.

Capturing Several Groups at Once

Protecting those Groups which control many puppets is vitally important – you stand to lose greatly if one is taken from you. Equally true: A game can be won by a well-timed strike at a Group that controls several puppets and fits well into your power structure.

The Bavarian Illuminati

Formally known as the “Ancient Illuminated Seers of Bavaria,” these are the original Illuminati. Many consider them to be the prototype of all subversive secret societies. They were indicted three times by the Spanish Inquisition but largely protected by their vows of secrecy each time. In 1776, the Bavarians were thought to have infiltrated the Freemasons, planning to conquer that organization from within.

Power and Goals: The Bavarians’ goal is simply raw power. They can win by controlling Groups with a total Power of 35 (including their own Power of 10). They are subtler than the other Illuminati; their special ability lets them make a privileged attack each turn at the cost of 5 MB.

Playing the Bavarian Illuminati: You have the highest Power, a good Income, and a special power that makes it hard for players to defend against you. Remember your special power and use it! Furthermore, your Goal is directly related to the strength of your Power Structure. When you build up your position in the game, you are also moving directly toward your victory!

Your best strategy is to play firmly, but conservatively. Don’t make waves or antagonize the other players. If they combine against you, they can bring you down. If they leave you alone, you have a good chance of moving steadily toward victory – or toward a sudden coup, like taking over a whole arm of someone else’s Power Structure, that will give you the Power you need. The most desirable puppets for the Bavarians are the high-powered Groups: the Mafia, the International Communist Conspiracy, and so on.

Opposing the Bavarian Illuminati: Good luck! The Bavarian Illuminati have no particular weak point. Your best bet is to watch them carefully, playing on the other Illuminati’s fear of the Bavarian power and abilities. Together you may be able to bring him down, or at least keep him too weak to win.

The Bermuda Triangle

Sinking ships is just a sideline with these people. Their philosophy is to ensure control by taking over many different types of Groups. They are so shrouded in mystery and fear that others are always taking the blame for the unexplained happenings around their headquarters off the Florida coast.

Power and Goals: The Bermuda Triangle player has the ability to reorganize his Power Structure freely at the end of each turn. The Triangle wins by collecting at least one example of each of the ten different alignments. If a Group has several alignments, it counts for each of them.



Playing the Triangle: Your enemies will be continually looking over your shoulder, counting alignments. Once you get six or seven, they'll make it hard for you to add more. Often your best bet is to deal with another player – an exchange that gives you two or three Groups at once, sealing your victory, while giving *him* what he needs for his *own* Goals.

The Triangle is the most likely of all the Illuminati to benefit from making a deal. Keep your lines of communication open, and always have a little spare cash and a Special card or two, to improve your bargaining position.

Alternatively, if your enemies are obsessed with counting alignments and keeping you away from your special victory, you can make a quick stab at a regular victory. This often works, and your rivals will hate themselves for letting you get away with it.

The most desirable targets for the Triangle are those combining many different alignments: the Semiconscious Liberation Army is the biggest prize of all! And the Orbital Mind Control Lasers can give you the victory by changing an alignment at the right time.

Opposing the Triangle: First, make absolutely sure that he doesn't get the SLA. If you can, keep him away from the IRS and KGB, too; though they have only two alignments each, they are comparatively rare ones (and, unlike the SLA, the Groups themselves are useful).

Pick one relatively rare alignment, like Communist or Weird, and make *sure* that none are available for the Triangle to pick up. The Discordians will happily help you keep the Weird Groups out of circulation, but don't let them get too far with it!

The Triangle will want the Orbital Mind Control Lasers. You *must* keep them out of his hands.

In general, watch the Bermuda Triangle closely, but don't just concentrate on *how many* alignments he has picked up. Look at *which ones* he still needs. If he is still trying for a Communist, he can be stopped. But if all he needs, for instance, is a Violent Group, look out! There are Violent card everywhere, and many of them are fairly easy to capture.

The Discordian Society

Worshippers of Eris, the Roman Goddess of Strife and Chaos, they delight in confusion. The Discordians seek to bring all the strange and peculiar elements of society under their banner, and especially delight in confusing the "straights" around them.

Power and Goals: The Discordians can win by controlling five Weird Groups, and they get an extra +4 on all attempts to control such Groups. Because of their chaotic nature, they are immune to attacks from Straight or Government Groups. No Straight or Government Group may attack the Discordian power structure in any way, or aid such an attack.

Playing Discordia: Your special powers are of no use offensively, and your Power and Income aren't especially good. But hang in there! The other Illuminati aren't likely to see you as a threat. Enlarge your Power Structure gradually, picking up Weird cards when you can. Be sure to get a couple of Groups with two or three control arrows, because few of your Weirds will have any control arrows at all.

To reinforce your "harmless" impression, you may even want to pass occasionally. By the time your foes see you as a threat, you should be able to deal with them . . . and when they attack, they will have to do it without some of their most powerful Groups, because Straight and Government Groups cannot affect you in any way.

The Secret Masters of Fandom (S.M.O.F.) and the Science Fiction Fans are useful puppets for you.

Opposing Discordia: Since very few Weird Groups have Power, they cannot be destroyed (except with the *Whispering Campaign* card). The few Weird Groups that do have power are very valuable to Discordia. Destroy them or take them over yourself. The International Communist Conspiracy, the Mafia, and the CFL-AIO, which are neither Straight or Government, are good tools to use against the Discordians.

When Discordia gets three Weird Groups, be careful. When he gets four, act!

The Gnomes of Zurich

This is the old nickname for the Swiss bankers who are reputed to be the money-masters of the world. Not only do they have huge amounts of money, but they can transfer it quickly and easily, and they have a finger in every financial pie.

Power and Goals: The Gnomes may move money freely among all their Groups at the end of a turn. They win by amassing 150 megabucks – not just on their Illuminati, but in the treasuries of their whole power structure.

Playing the Gnomes: Try to take control of high Income cards like the IRS, the Multinational Oil Companies, the Republicans, the Democrats, and the International Cocaine Smugglers. However, if you openly move in on the super-high Income Groups, your foes are likely to target you for extinction.

Trying for a larger number of *moderately* lucrative Groups is often more productive. Your overall income will be the same, and your Power Structure will be dispersed and harder to hurt.

If you get the Market Manipulation card, hold it until you can win at one stroke by cashing it in. Meanwhile, don't be reluctant to spend money when you need to. Don't attack indiscriminately, but defend your income-producing Groups. If you lose them, you might as well give up.

Opposing The Gnomes: Keep track of their overall income – the amount of money they make each turn. When

the Gnomes' income gets to the 25-MB range, Zurich is probably close to a victory. Attack! A coalition is probably your only chance; attack either to control or to neutralize, even if the attacks are hopeless, to bleed the Gnomes' treasury. Attack puppets that don't have much money in their own treasuries, to make it more expensive to defend them. Whenever they try to make a deal, demand that they give you more money "because they are so rich."

The longer the game runs, the richer the Gnomes get. To stop them, play aggressively.

The Network

Some say the Network is a conspiracy of the world's computer programmers; others believe that the programmers are merely the pawns, and the computers themselves have taken over. Either way, they are rich and powerful, and they are probably watching you *right now*. The Network knows everything, and it knows it first.

Power and Goals: The Network player draws *two* cards every turn. The Network can win by collecting 25 points worth of *transferable* power, including its own 7 points.

Playing The Network: Your special ability is a very good one. It increases your chance of getting good cards of *all* kinds. Try to keep at least one Special card in your hand; these cards can provide excellent bargaining leverage.

However, your Special Goal is tough, since few Groups have a high Transferable Power, and such Groups are valuable to everyone. Often your best bet is a regular victory, unless the right Groups come up, but this is easier for you than for some of your foes.

Opposing The Network: Don't destroy Groups with Transferable Power (unless you're Cthulhu); take them over, protect them, and use them. Maybe you can sell one to the Network for more than it's worth. If he gets several Special cards in his hand, you can make the other players paranoid about them and put together a coalition. Otherwise, try to play him off against Bavaria, who will be after many of the same targets.

The Network has an extra advantage in a game with inexperienced players, who are less likely to go after the Groups with transferable power.

The Servants of Cthulhu

These are the students of those things man was not meant to know. They seek to master arcane powers and inhuman forces, though they risk their own lives and souls.

Power and Goals: The Servants of Cthulhu seek to destroy, and they are good at it; this player gets an extra +2 on any attempt to destroy any Group! Their objective in the game is to destroy eight other Groups. If they knock another Illuminati out of the game by taking away its last Group, the destroyed Illuminati counts toward their total, too.

Playing Cthulhu: Start destroying Groups early, or you'll never get your goal of eight – but don't overdo it. Whenever the other players want a Group destroyed (especially early in the game, when your Goal is far away and you don't look dangerous), offer to do their dirty work for them. If they will help pay for the destruction, so much the better! And, if you have a chance to eliminate another player entirely, the rest of the Illuminati will probably help you, even though the destruction counts toward your own Goal. After all, knocking someone out of the game helps *everyone* else.

After you destroy six or seven Groups, the other players may get so paranoid about your Special Goal that they will lose track of the number of Groups you control – letting you win an easy *regular* victory.



Take over a couple of low-power Groups instead of destroying them; you can use their income during the game, and later, when you need more victims, there they are!

To make your job of destruction easier, you need Groups with money and power. Also useful are those Groups that give their possessor a bonus to destroy (like the Cycle Gangs and the Semiconscious Liberation Army). But don't go out of your way to take one – they're not that much better than a Transferable Power Group, and they make you *look* dangerous. Remember that if you knock a foe out of the game, by capturing, neutralizing, or destroying his last Group, the destroyed Illuminati counts as a kill!

Opposing Cthulhu: Start while he's small; when he gets powerful, it will be too late for anything but luck to help you. There are two strategies you can use.

The first is to take away his prey . . . a Group cannot be destroyed if it's already gone! When a low-power Group comes up, grab it and protect it if it is useful; if the Group is not useful, destroy it yourself before Cthulhu can get to it.

Alternatively, you can conspire with the other players to deliberately leave low-power Groups vulnerable. If Cthulhu spends his first few turns gleefully killing small fry, he won't be controlling very much . . . and he can be eliminated completely by a concerted attack on the fourth or fifth turn, just when he thinks victory is within his tentacles.

The Society of Assassins

Arising in the Middle East, the Assassins were a secret order of the Ismailite sect of Muslims. They attained the height of their power during the Middle Ages but continue even today. Often they do not need to act . . . the mere hint of their displeasure is enough to intimidate a foe. The ancient warning of the Assassins, the dagger left on a rival's pillow, has made kings tremble.

Power and Goals: They win if they control six Violent Groups. Their special ability is an extra +4 on any attempt to neutralize an enemy-controlled Group.

Playing the Assassins: Your special ability is purely an offensive weapon. Use it sparingly; it is a powerful threat. Others are likely to support you in an attempt to neutralize, since you don't benefit directly. (Of course, you can neutralize a Group, and then attempt to control it!) Your foes may even be willing to bribe you to leave them alone.

To win, you need Violent cards. Build up a reserve of cash to increase your chances of getting good Violent Groups when they come along, and of keeping them after you get them. Your very best cards are those that, like Texas and the Mafia, are both powerful and Violent.

Opposing the Assassins: Whatever you do, don't let the Assassins single you out as a foe! With their ability to neutralize, they are a very dangerous enemy. Offer to help them in an attempt to neutralize someone else's Groups; that way, the Assassins don't benefit directly, injure someone else, and make enemies elsewhere.

A subtle and powerful Group, the Assassins are best opposed with guile and indirection. You may be tempted to

destroy Violent cards – but be careful; this a very obvious ploy. Watch their Power Structure. Once they get five Violent Groups, it is time to abandon subtlety and attack.

The UFOs

Are they creatures from outer space, or human super-scientists? No one knows. These are the most elusive of all the Illuminati. Their aims are shrouded in secrecy and change constantly.

Power and Goals: The UFOs' advantage is speed; this Illuminati Group may attack (or aid an attack) twice per turn. No other Group may do this. Their Special Goal is chosen by the UFO player himself, at the beginning of the game. He

picks any of the other seven Goals and writes it on a piece of paper, secretly. He may reveal it at any time, but will usually not do so until he has achieved it!

Playing the UFOs: Your biggest advantage is that your opponents don't know what you're trying to do. Keep them guessing! Destroy a Group or two to make them wonder if you're really Cthulhu (and to keep the real Cthulhu from getting them). Money is always useful, and a big pile of it will make them wonder if you're Zurich. Take over a couple of Weird Groups, and you've made Discordia's life miserable. And so on.

If you need an extra negotiating tool, you can offer to tell what your Special Goal really is. You might even tell the truth!

Your special ability to act twice can be very powerful if used properly. Rather than acting directly, you may want to let the UFOs *aid* twice a turn, adding their power to that of other powerful Groups in your control, for devastating attacks that don't cost much money.

Opposing the UFOs: First, you have to figure out what they are doing. Watch carefully! Then proceed as indicated for that particular Goal. If you see that the UFOs are very close to *any* Goal, start worrying. In the meantime, try to keep them away from Groups with especially high Power or Income, just on general principles.



Acknowledgements

Special thanks go to David Martin (who first suggested doing a game about the Illuminati), Elisabeth Zakes (for playtesting above and beyond the call of duty), and Draper and Susan Kauffman (for the play-by-mail version that illuminated the Post Office).

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Conspiracy is an ancient pastime; so is the study of conspiracy. Secrecy in itself is harmless, but it always attracts attention. And many “known” secret groups are powerful indeed! Try to envision the criminal world without the Mafia, the American civil rights movement without the Ku Klux Klan, or an American college campus without Greek-letter societies. An estimated 15 million Americans are involved in secret (or at least secretive) groups of one kind or another.

A number of excellent sources are available for those wishing more information about (a) the Illuminati; (b) people who believe in them; and (c) people who enjoy leaving false trails to confuse people who believe in the Illuminati.

Any good encyclopedia will include articles on the historical Society of Assassins, Bavarian Illuminati, and Freemasonry, and the connections, known and speculative, between them.

The *Illuminatus!* trilogy, by Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, is required reading for any conspiracy buff. Wilson is this century’s foremost public authority on the Illuminati, though his books conceal their information within great masses of humor, lies, and philosophical speculation. His *Schrödinger’s Cat* trilogy is entertaining but relatively uninformative. *Cosmic Trigger (Final Secret of the Illuminati)* is scientific/philosophical commentary, laced with discussion of conspiracy and Strange Coincidence. *Masks of the Illuminati* is fictionalized history (or historicized fiction).

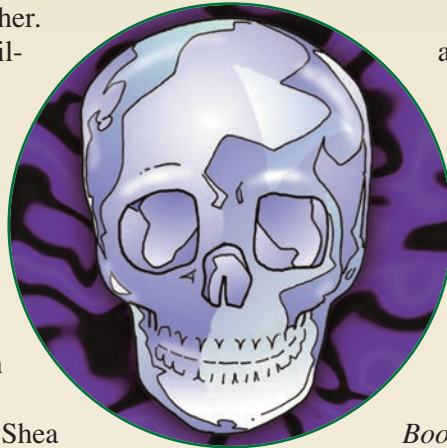
More recently, Umberto Eco’s *Foucault’s Pendulum* illustrates the folly of looking too deeply into any conspiracy . . . or into your own mind.

A History of Secret Societies, by “Arkon Daraul,” is an interesting primer, discussing many Illuminated, pseudo-Illuminated, and totally unconnected Groups. It should not be taken as gospel, but makes a good research guide.

The Crying of Lot 49, by Thomas Pynchon, is a classic study of alienation (and a lot of fun!). If one accepts the Illuminati, can the sinister minions of Tristero be far behind? What Pynchon does not say here is far more important than what he does.

Principia Discordia, by “Malaclypse the Younger,” is the bible of Discordianism. More entertaining than most holy books, it also contains a number of interesting truths, not all of which were intended by the authors. SJ Games publishes an edition of the *Principia*, and will gleefully sell you a copy!

The Illuminoids, by Neal Wilgus, is an examination, not of the Illuminati themselves, but of the men and women who study and believe in the various conspiracy theories.



Holy Blood, Holy Grail, by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, and Henry Lincoln, argues that an unrevealed conspiracy has, in fact, been working among us for 2,000 years. The recent thriller *The Da Vinci Code* recycled the idea for the mass market, with more explosions.

Alan Moore’s brilliant graphic novel *Watchmen* mingles superheroics with conspiracy. Power can indeed corrupt, no matter what its nature.

World Revolution, by Nesta H. Webster, is a turgid text by a woman who was chasing Illuminati long before most of us were born. She takes the Bavarian Illuminati very seriously, citing them as the guiding force behind Communism, the French Revolution, and so on. A bigoted and alarmist book, which strongly warns of “the danger now threatening civilization.” Rare, but available in some large libraries.

Also from the 1920s, Charles Fort’s *The Book of the Damned* and *Lo!* cite numerous cases of the strange and inexplicable: showers of frogs, vanishing men, impossible coincidences. His favorite theme: factual reports suppressed by “authority” because they cannot be explained. A typical conjecture: “I think we’re property.”

Another early piece of conspiracy literature is the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This is an anti-Semitic hoax first propounded early in this century; it purports to be the minutes of the meetings of a Zionist conspiracy to (what else?) take over the world. Oddly, many “conspiracy buffs” still take the Protocols at face value.

Martin Gardner’s *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science* contains detailed, if unsympathetic, treatments of a number of “fringe” cults, pseudosciences, and peculiar phenomena. It could well inspire a reader to invent groups stranger than anything in the game.

Finally, the writings of the survivalist/financial author Howard Ruff contain many references to (or debunkings of) modern theories of economic conspiracy. What *really* happened to silver prices in 1981-82? Why did the stock market crash in 1987, and why doesn’t it crash now? Why does inflation keep on inflating, and who benefits most?

Those who remain interested in the mystery of the Illuminati will no doubt go on to more serious research involving the works of Aleister Crowley, Abd al-Azrad, Tirion Palantir, “Bob” Dobbs, O.K. Ravenhurst, Kilgore Trout, and so on. Please *don’t* write to tell me what you learn. I don’t want to know. And don’t blame me if you vanish on some foggy night, never to be seen again. After all, it’s just a game . . . isn’t it? Fnord.

– Steve Jackson

ILLUMINATI RULES SUMMARY

ALIGNMENTS

Government is the opposite of **Communist**.

Liberal is the opposite of **Conservative**.

Peaceful is the opposite of **Violent**.

Straight is the opposite of **Weird**.

Criminal has no opposite alignment.

Fanatic – Any two Fanatic Groups are considered “opposite” to each other.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Play goes *counter-clockwise* around the table.

1. **Collect income on all cards that have an Income number.**
2. **Draw a card.** If it is a Special card, the player keeps it. If the card is a Group, it is placed face-up in the uncontrolled area.
3. **Take two “actions.”** See list, below.
4. **Take any “free actions.”** These do not count against the two actions allowed during each turn. They may be taken before, between, or after the two regular actions. See below for list.
5. **Transfer money.** Part or all of any Group’s money may be moved to an adjacent Group. Two money transfers are allowed per turn.
6. **Take special-power actions.**
7. **Add targets.** Draw cards until there are two uncontrolled Groups. Discard any Specials drawn.

ACTIONS

Regular Actions: Attack a Group (to control, neutralize, or destroy); Transfer money; Move a Group; Give a Group away.

Free Actions: Drop a Group; Give away money or Specials; Use a Special (Exception: Bribery is a regular action.)

Passing: A player may choose not to take any actions of any sort and collect 5MB instead.

ATTACKS

Attack to Control. Defending Group’s Resistance is subtracted from attacking Group’s Power, including any Transferable Power from other Groups aiding in the attack. Only members of attacker’s own Power Structure can aid the attack.

Modify this number for attacker’s or defender’s special powers, for money spent by both sides, and for other factors shown below.

Using two dice, attacker must roll this number or less. A roll of 11 or 12 is an automatic failure.

Same alignment (e.g., Weird vs. Weird)	+4
Opposite alignment (e.g., Straight vs. Weird)	-4
Each Megabuck (MB) spent by attacker	+1
Each MB spent by defending Group	-2
Each MB spent by defender’s Illuminati	-1
Each MB spent by other players to Interfere	-1
Each MB spent by other players to Assist	+1
Defending Group is controlled directly by Illuminati	-10
Defending Group is 1 Group away from Illuminati	-5
Defending Group is 2 Groups away from Illuminati	-2

Attack to Neutralize. As above, except that attacker receives a +6 bonus.

Attack to Destroy. As above except:

1. Roll “Power minus Power,” instead of “Power minus Resistance.”
2. +4 for *opposite* alignment; -4 for *identical*.
3. Attacking Group does not need an open control arrow.

BASIC GOALS

Groups to be controlled, *including Illuminati*

2 or 3 players (not recommended)	13
4 players	12
5 players	10
6 players	9
7 or 8 players (not recommended)	8

SPECIAL GOALS

Bavarian Illuminati. Control Groups with a total power of 35 or more (including their own Power of 10).

Bermuda Triangle. Control at least one Group of each alignment. A Group with more than one alignment counts for each of its alignments.

Discordian Society. Control five Weird Groups.

Gnomes of Zurich. Collect 150 megabucks (in the whole Power Structure’s treasuries).

The Network. Control Groups with a total Transferable Power of 25 (including their own 7).

Servants of Cthulhu. Destroy eight Groups.

Society of Assassins. Control six Violent Groups.

UFOs. At the beginning of the game, after players choose their Illuminati, the UFO player picks the Special Goal of any other Illuminati group. He writes it down, keeping it secret from the other players.